



PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America
Pioneer Unit

March 2013

Volume 20, Number 7

MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

Date: March 14, 2013

Time: 9:30 a.m. Meet and Greet
10:00 a.m. Meeting and Workshop

Location: Festival Hill Service Building, Round Top
Directions: Exit Highway 290 at Texas 237 (Round Top exit).
Travel south on 237. Turn right on Jaster Road and
left into the parking lot for the Service Building.

Program: Thyme Well Spent Workshop
Festival Hill Garden Work
[You will have a choice of labeling, pricing, and finishing
items for sale in the Thyme Well Spent Shop; or you
can bring your gloves and garden tools to work in the
gardens with Henry getting it ready for visitors. We will
break for lunch at 12 noon.]

Coordinator: Carla Lessard

Hosts: Cathy Comiskey, Louise Rice, Karen Cornwell,
Georgetta Welch, and Rhonda Herzog

Lunch: Bring Your Own Lunch (drinks will be provided)

March 10
Daylight Savings
Time Begins



March 20
Vernal Equinox

March 27
Sap Full Moon

Reminder from the Thyme Well Spent Co-Chairs: For the March meeting you will have a choice of what you'd like to do. You may either work with Henry in the gardens, getting them ready for all the guests at the Forum, or help put the finishing touches on items for the Thyme Well Spent Shop.

Carla Lessard and Kay Von Minden

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Hello, Everyone!

Where has February gone? I hope you managed to savor more of that short month than I did. I lost two weeks to a cold that laid me low, and I am trying to recover and get productive again.

We are getting ready for the Herbal Forum, and I remind you of the need to participate in this important event, our only fund-raising event of the year. Last month we listed all of the committee information. If you have not yet signed up to work at the Forum, refer to your February Pioneer Paths for committee chairs or consult Georgia Sowers (contact information elsewhere in this edition of Pioneer Paths). As a reminder, you can find last month's Pioneer Paths on our website if you no longer have it on your computer. (The website is herbsocietypioneer.org)

While the Forum is certainly hard work, it is also fun and a good opportunity to interact with members of the Pioneer Unit. I hope that you have already attended a workshop and spent some creative time with fellow members. And I look forward to working with all of you at our March meeting and on March 22 and 23.

Please remember to tell your friends about the Plant Sale and Thyme Well Spent and Gazebo gift stores. Although many people might not be able to attend a day of seminars, most plant lovers can find some time to shop for new items for their gardens — and we always have a wonderful selection of plants. Please do what you can to publicize our event.

I hope that you also find some time to work in your own gardens. We have planted some new fruit trees at our place, and I am preparing my spring vegetable garden. I keep hoping to get the old basil plants out of the herb garden before the new plants get started. I believe I will be more motivated to weed when I have some flats of new plants from the Forum to put into the garden. Somehow it is always easier to weed if I am planting as well.

Whatever motivates you, I hope to see you working at the Pioneer Unit meeting and Forum — and I hope we can find some time to visit each other's gardens soon.

Oh, give us pleasure in the flowers to-day;
And give us not to think so far away
As the uncertain harvest; keep us here
All simply in the springing of the year.

Robert Frost

Happy Spring!
Linda L. Rowlett
Chair

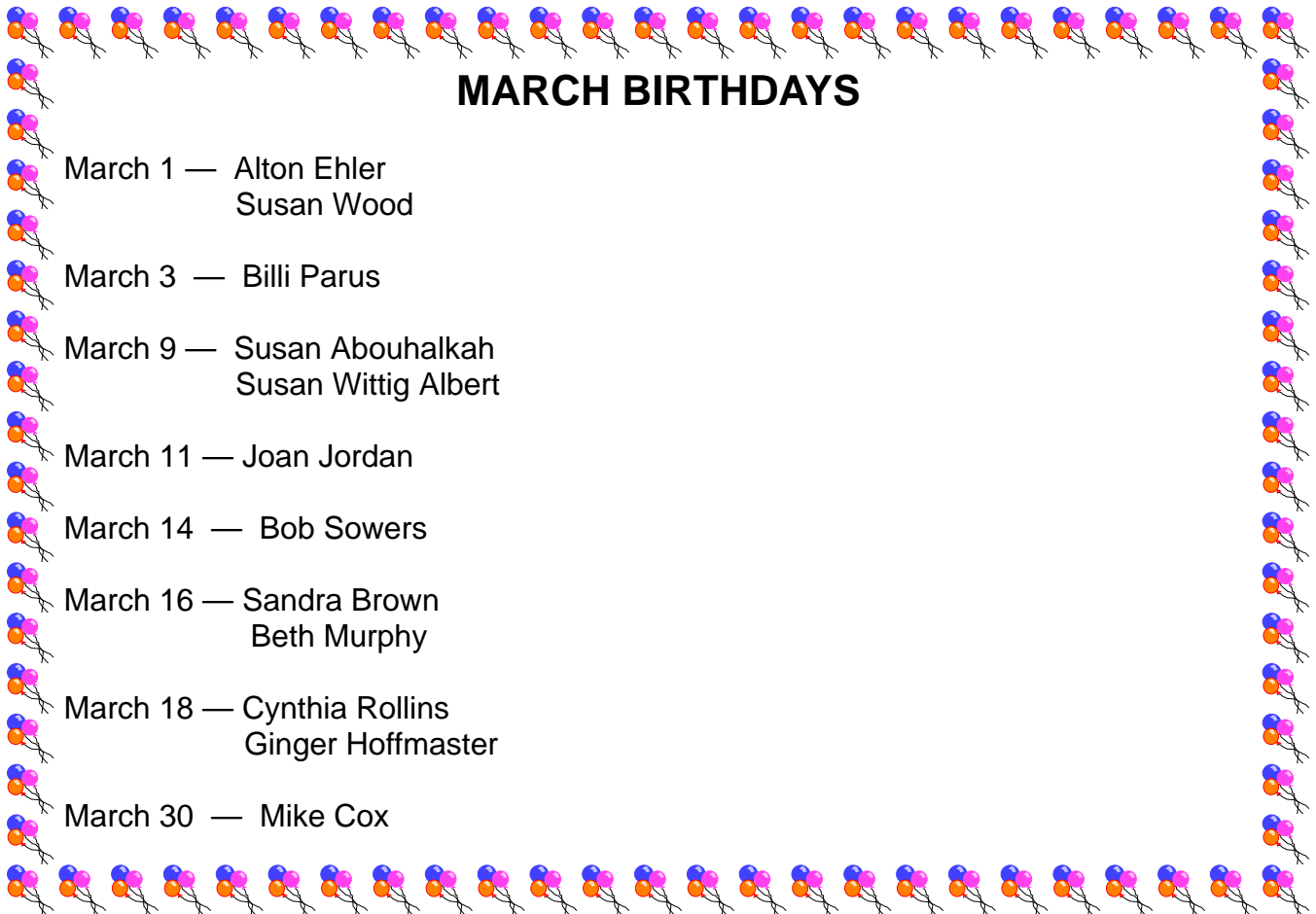
FROM THE PROGRAMS CHAIR

We all enjoyed learning about the different types and tastes of chocolate at our last meeting.

Heide Vukovic shared her chocolate knowledge with a large crowd of Pioneer Unit members. We were able to taste her variety of samples and learn about the "Chocolate Wheel" during her entertaining presentation. It was a great fun morning!

Our next gathering will be on March 14, 2013, at Festival Hill in the Service Building on Jaster Road. We will put the finishing touches on the Thyme Well Spent shop items and fix up the gardens a bit for the Herbal Forum on March 22 and 23. It will be a fun morning of fellowship and accomplishment. Please come and join us!

See you there!
 Diana Reed
 Program Chair



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- March 1 — Alton Ehler
 Susan Wood
- March 3 — Billi Parus
- March 9 — Susan Abouhalkah
 Susan Wittig Albert
- March 11 — Joan Jordan
- March 14 — Bob Sowers
- March 16 — Sandra Brown
 Beth Murphy
- March 18 — Cynthia Rollins
 Ginger Hoffmaster
- March 30 — Mike Cox

HERBAL FORUM MEALS

**The HSA Pioneer Unit Member
Meal Reservation Form**

**18th Annual Herbal Forum at
Round Top**

**Friday March 22, 2013
Saturday March 23, 2013**

Name

(____) _____
Area Code / Phone Number

E-mail

Friday Meal Reservation

_____ Friday Lunch

Saturday Meal Reservation

_____ Saturday Lunch

**You can have Friday or Saturday for free. If
you wish to have both lunches, check the
blank below:**

_____ second lunch at \$12.00/
person

**Return this form at or before the March
Unit meeting to Henry Flowers, with check
payable to The James Dick Foundation (if
appropriate). Return at the meeting or
mail to:**

**The HSA Pioneer Unit
PO Box 23
Round Top, TX 78954**

Pioneer Unit Members,

To the left is the Pioneer Unit meal reservation form for the Herbal Forum. This year I am giving you the option of having either the Friday or Saturday lunch for free, but you must sign up with the form in order to attend—and by the deadline as well. To be eligible for the free lunch you must plan to work at least 8 hours during the event. If you will be attending either the Friday or Saturday lunches, then please fill out this form and return it to me at the March Unit meeting or via mail (to the Pioneer Unit mail box) if you will not be able to attend the meeting. If you would like to purchase the second lunch (at a reduced cost to Pioneer Unit members), then you must also sign up and pay for it.

If you are interested in attending the Friday night dinner in honor of our presenters, then you need to call the office at Festival Hill and register and pay through them. Please let them know that you are a member of the Pioneer Unit.

I will have copies of this form available at the March Pioneer Unit meeting, and I ask that you have your form to me no later than that day (March 14). I will not be able to accept a meal request after that date as I will have more pressing things to do.

If the Friday lunch gets a lot of reservations by attendees of the Herbal Forum, then I may have to ask that you do a takeaway lunch so that there will be seating room for the attendees.

Many Thanks,
Henry Flowers

NOTICE TO FORUM VOLUNTEERS...ALL VOLUNTEERS!

The most exciting time of the year for our Pioneer Unit is upon us -- Herbal Forum Time! So many plants to move, so many crafts to make, so many tired souls! But, there is a rainbow at the end of the Forum Storm...and it is the complimentary BBQ and private presentation by Chrissy Moore, director of the National Herb Garden. For those of us workers who miss many of the special Forum events that our guests enjoy, this program, on the final Forum evening (Saturday), is especially for us, the Forum workers. Anyone who volunteers, whether member, affiliate, spouse, baker, or candlestick-maker, is eligible for the free BBQ dinner and Chrissy's private performance. All that is asked of you is that you help with the Forum in some capacity and that you register for the evening's free dinner and program. You must sign up for both the meal and event so that we can manage the food quantities, set-up, etc. If you have a spouse or friend or non-associated Unit member that we need to know about, and who has helped at the Forum, please help us get them registered too.

The registration cutoff date is Monday, March 18. The event will be held in the upper and lower chapels on the Festival Hill campus.

A SIGN-UP SHEET WILL BE AT THE MARCH MEETING.

YOU MAY ALSO PHONE/EMAIL :

CAROLYN THOMAS (979-251-8386, cthomas1138@aol.com)

GINGER HEATH (979-278-3911, gbh105@gmail.com)



Herb of March – Parsley

Parsley may be the most ubiquitous of all herbs. It is available year-round in most grocery stores and is often employed as a garnishing sprig on a plate for a nice meal or simply as a beautiful green sprinkled in chopped form on a dish of pasta, meat, vegetable, or grain. It is no wonder that it is often taken for granted, but it truly deserves much reverence for being such a devoted and useful herbal companion.

Parsley is a biennial member of the carrot family – the Apiaceae (to which other herbs such as dill, fennel, chervil, and coriander belong). For us in Texas it is a cool season plant that is best put into the ground in the fall or early winter and harvested into the spring, when it will often bolt (a term used to describe the flowering process characteristic of most plants in this family) – flowering, seeding, and then most commonly, and unfortunately, dying. Sometimes a plant in a somewhat shaded area may struggle and survive through the heat of our summers, but that is the exception and not the norm.

To propagate parsley it is necessary to sow seeds. All members of this family (at least to my knowledge) must be propagated this way. An old adage says that parsley seeds must go to hell and back seven times before they germinate. It may take a while for the seeds to germinate, but not nearly as long as many other seeds I've sown. I find that generally they pop up within two to three weeks. I start sowing them in flats in the Festival Hill greenhouse in early October so that we can get them in the ground sometime in early to mid November. According to the Tucker and DeBaggio's Encyclopedia of Herbs, there is a chemical called coumarin in the seeds which slows their germination. This chemical can be leached from the seeds by water, so soaking them for a period, possibly overnight, may speed germination.

A trick that Madalene Hill told me about that may speed germination time is to freeze the seeds in ice cubes. Put a few seeds in each cell of an ice cube tray and then fill with water. Let the tray sit for about 10 to 15 minutes so that the seeds will soak up some water and then put the tray in the freezer. Keep frozen for a week or so and then put the ice cubes on top of potting soil to melt. After the ice has melted put a very thin layer of soil (you don't want much as the seeds are small) over the seeds and keep them moist. We place a layer or two of newspaper over the top and keep it moist in order to keep the soil below evenly moist.

There are two types of parsley – leaf parsley and root parsley. As the names imply, they have different uses. The most common type is leaf parsley, but in some regions root parsley, often known as Hamburg or turnip-rooted parsley, is used as a root vegetable (much like its cousin the carrot). There are two main types of leaf parsley – curly leaf and flat (aka Italian) leaf parsleys. Some say that the flat leaf type has a more robust taste. Studies show that the two are basically similar in taste and which type you prefer is up to you. There is a variety of flat leaf parsley known as 'Catalogno', or simply 'Giant Italian' in this country, which does have a superior flavor and often a higher yield as well.

One of my favorite uses of curly parsley is to edge flower beds in the cooler parts of the year. Its rich green color is cheering in the winter when there is so much brown in the garden and it really makes a beautiful companion to pansies, dianthus, and calendulas. It is also a great pot plant which can be kept close to the door for harvest. When you do harvest your parsley, make sure to cut the leaf stem near the crown of the plant. If you cut off the leaflets at the tip, the leftover "stalk" will not sprout new leaflets as it has no buds – which are all near the crown.

Many members of the carrot family are wonderful larval food plants for many butterflies, and parsley is no exception. While I find that most prefer dill or fennel, they will readily eat parsley as well – but seem to stay away from the strongly aromatic coriander.

Parsley contains high levels of vitamins A, B₁, B₂, C, niacin, calcium, and iron. Its leaves are rich in chlorophyll and are said to sweeten the breath and can help to meld the flavors of other herbs and foods in a culinary dish. So next time you are served a plate with a garnish of parsley on the side, either chop it up and put it on your food or munch on it afterward as a breath freshener.

In Mexico parsley is an essential ingredient in *salsa verde*; in the Middle East it is the main ingredient (normally more than 50% of volume) in *tabouleh*; and in Argentina it is key in *chimichurri*.

Medicinally parsley is said to help to reduce inflammation and stimulate the digestion. In large amounts it may damage the liver and kidneys and stimulate uterine contractions which can lead to abortion.

In the language of herbs, parsley is equated with "festivity." This is likely due to its use in happy celebrations such as weddings, feasts, and competitions in ancient Greece. It was often woven into garlands and placed atop the head. The victors of the Isthmian games were crowned with dried or withered parsley and the victors of the Nemean games were crowned with the fresh leaves.

The botanical name of the plant is *Petroselinum crispum*. *Petros* means rock and is a reference to its native habitat of rocky places near the coast of the eastern Mediterranean. *Selinon* means celery, which is another close relative. The specific epithet *crispum* refers to the crispate leaves (highly cut and very "fluffy" in appearance) of many varieties – mainly the ones we call "curly."

To dream of parsley was said to indicate unhappiness in love, but to dream of eating parsley presaged good news.

Enjoy its beauty and use it often!

Henry Flowers,

Pioneer Unit Garden Chairman



MEMBER INFORMATION

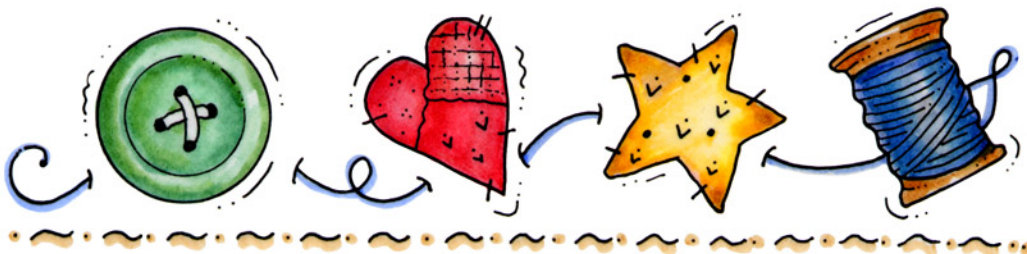
At our February meeting we welcomed and introduced a new guest, Beverly Green, who was invited by Linda Rowlett and Mary Reeves. Beverly and her husband moved to Welcome, Texas, in the Industry area from Houston area, and she is very active in numerous gardening organizations. We also welcomed our former active member Kathy LeBlanc, referred by Carla Lessard, for her 2nd visit with us. Numerous of our affiliates were with us, including Susan Abouhalkah, Peggy Cook, Jacqui Highton, Sara Holland, Joan Jordan, Marijane Lipscomb, and Pamela Murski. Also attending was member-at-large Alice Kyle. We are very happy for all of you to attend, making for great camaraderie amongst everyone.

And we welcomed our newest active member, Pam Traylor, who has been attending our meetings since October and is fitting in with the group in a great way. Pam was brought to our Unit by active member Cheryl Easley. She and her husband Tommy live in Bellville, Texas, and Pam is especially interested in herbs and gardening. Her background is impressive, with a focus on education, having been a Home Economics teacher and attending Southern Living Magazine Cooking School. Pam's talents have been utilized greatly as Innkeeper at the historical Ant Street Inn in Brenham. She has been volunteering with us in the gardens at Festival Hill and at meetings. We are happy that Pam has joined us. Be sure to get to know her and make her feel at home. Welcome, Pam!

It's time now to start firming up your plans on where you wish to participate at Forum and in the preparation. Sign-up sheets for various areas of volunteering were at our February meeting and will be handled by the appropriate committees. If you haven't signed up yet, you may email me at gzsowers@att.net or phone me at [979-836-8228](tel:979-836-8228), and I'll help guide you to the proper contact. Participating at Forum and with the setup on Thursday will help you in obtaining your volunteer hours for this year, as well as fulfilling the requirement of participating in a major event (our only fund-raiser). Remember, you will receive **3 hours** volunteer time for attending and helping with Forum prep at our March meeting so we sincerely hope to see you at the meeting this month.

For help with any questions about membership or other information, always feel free to contact me or any of our other members; we're here to help you.

Georgia Sowers
Membership Chair



MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING
HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA
PIONEER UNIT
February 14, 2013

Linda Rowlett, Chair, opened the meeting.

Georgia Sowers, Membership, introduced visitors Kathy LeBlanc and Beverly Green. Susan Abouhalkah, Peggy Cook, Jacqui Highton, Sara Holland, Joan Jordan, Marijane Lipscomb, Pamela Murski, all affiliates; and HSA Member at Large, Alice Kyle, also attended. Georgia then introduced Pioneer Unit's newest member, Pam Traylor, Bellville.

Diana Reed, Programs, thanked the angels and hostesses for their efforts and introduced Heide Vukovic, Chocolatier and Pastry Chef, who gave an informative presentation about Chocolate.

At the conclusion of the program, Linda Rowlett summarized a new policy relating to participation in workshops. The new policy provides active members sign-up priority for workshops with limited participation. A gourd workshop, to be held February 25th at Festival Hill in the greenhouse, will be taught by Lynn and Elton Ehler. Extra gourds will be available for TWS/plant sale preparation.

Lynn Ehler, Rosemary, thanked members for their generous contributions of greeting cards.

Ginger Heath, Education and Special Events, reported a special event with Crissy Moore, Curator of the National Herb Garden. The presentation, and BBQ event on the Chapel patio, will follow the Herbal Forum and is being sponsored by the Pioneer Unit. It has been organized as a special treat for active members and Forum workers/volunteers. Ginger noted that additional information will be in the March newsletter. Carolyn Thomas suggested that this was an excellent opportunity to hear about the National Herb Garden, a Unit-sponsored organization.

Carla Lessard, Thyme Well Spent Shop, reported that three TWS workshops were held recently for creating jellies, wreaths, and teas. She said a good time was had by all.

Henry Flowers, Way and Means, announced a TWS herbal blends workshop, to be held soon. Forum volunteer sheets are available and members were encouraged to sign-up. Henry also reported the availability of Forum event publications and said that questions about Forum could be directed to him. Finally, he announced a book sale, planned for the following day, which was organized for sharing Gwen Barclay's library of 500-700 books with the Pioneer Unit membership. The sale will be in Room 9 of the Service Building, from 1-4 p.m., with the initial two hours limited to active members. Remaining books will be sold during Forum and all proceeds will be donated to the National Herb Society for internship support.

Sue Edmondson, Plant Sale, asked wagon owners to make them available again this year as they are a great help to the plant sale. She also asked that people begin saving cardboard flats.

June Smith, Public Relations, asked for volunteers to distribute Forum publication materials.

The meeting was then adjourned for lunch.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Cornwell, Secretary

January 15, 2013, PIONEER UNIT BOARD MEETING held at Festival Hill, Round Top, Texas

Attendees: Linda L. Rowlett, Diana Reed, Georgia Sowers, Janie S. Plummer, Lynn Ehler, Ginger Heath, Henry Flowers, June Smith, and Carolyn Thomas.

Programs Report – Diana Reed: Diana presented Program ideas for 2013-2014 programs. Diana announced that the programs for the next year will be discussed at a program committee meeting sometime in May.

Membership Report – Georgia Sowers: Georgia reported four new members during 2012: Georgetta Welch (January 2012); Susan Lake (February 2012); Sara Parker (May 2012), and Ginger Hoffmaster (June 2012). No new membership applications have yet been received for 2013, but Pam Traylor's application was expected soon. Mary Doebbeling's application for affiliate membership was approved by all voting Board members via email.

Treasurer's Report – Janie Plummer: Janie reviewed the available bank balance and income and expenses for the 2nd quarter. Budgeting for Book Club was discussed. Motion: Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted unanimously to add a \$200.00 budget line item under Education for Book Club expenses. Motion: Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Treasurer's Report.

Communications/PU website – June Smith/Susan Lake: The Pioneer Unit has gotten 30 "Likes" on Facebook, so now we can track additional data. Program Comments have drawn the most attention. Interest in the website has been building. The possibility of a small workshop for learning to use Facebook and the website was discussed.

Ways and Means – Henry Flowers: Projected plant sale costs, Sales Guidelines document, and committee functions were discussed. This year the budget amount is similar to last year's but there will be more fruit trees and fewer roses. Motion: Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted unanimously to approve the plant sale budget as presented. Motion: Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted unanimously to approve the plant sale procedures and guidelines as presented. Georgia Sowers will be Volunteer Coordinator for the Forum.

Other Business: Henry Flowers was appointed as district delegate to Ed Con. A question about workshops and special event sign-up was discussed. Motion: Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted unanimously to give active members priority for participation in PU workshops and special events, with affiliates having space-available sign-up.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen S. Cornwell
Secretary

NEWS FROM NATIONAL AND OTHER UNITS

Herb Society of America Annual Conference (EdCon)
St. Louis, Missouri — June 20-22, 2013
Meet us in St. Louis-Gateway to the American Prairie
St. Louis Hilton Frontenac
1335 South Lindbergh Boulevard
Saint Louis, Missouri 63131

Guest room reservations will be available the first week of March 2013. Registration information will be on the HSA website the first week of March. (Editor's Note: information is not yet available as of this publication.)

The Herb Society of America has a new blog! Enjoy the stories and share with other herb enthusiasts: <http://herbsocietyblog.wordpress.com/>

HSA members now receive a 10% discount (before taxes and shipping) on purchases from The Growers Exchange. Check out The Growers Exchange website:

<http://www.thegrowers-exchange.com/>

Herb Society of America Texas Thyme Unit

Herb Day

March 16, 9:00 a.m. — 2:00 p.m.

Speakers and vendors on the grounds of the historic Wynne House in Huntsville. You can find more information on Facebook. Just search for Texas Thyme Unit.

French Silk Chocolate Pie

This pie was once a winning recipe in the Pillsbury Bake-Off, which began as the General Mills "Grand National Recipe and Baking Contest" in 1949. It has a smooth texture which is worth the time it takes to create it.

1 single-layer pie crust in a 9 inch pan (or, as I prefer, a Graham or chocolate Graham cracker crust)
1 cup heavy cream, chilled
3 large eggs
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
2 tablespoons water
8 ounces bittersweet chocolate (50-80% chocolate liquor), melted and cooled
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
8 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened and cut into small pieces

Prepare and bake pie crust and allow to cool to room temperature.

Melt chocolate and set it aside to cool.

Whip the cream in a large bowl until soft peaks form, about 3 minutes. Put the whipped cream in a smaller bowl and refrigerate.

In a large, heatproof bowl mix the eggs, sugar, and water and place over a saucepan filled with $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of simmering water. Using a hand mixer beat the mixture until it starts to thicken and reaches 160° (about 7-10 minutes). Remove from heat and continue to beat until the mixture is fluffy and reaches room temperature (about 7-10 minutes).

Add chocolate and vanilla to egg mixture and beat until incorporated. Beat in butter, a few pieces at a time, until well-combined. Using a spatula, fold in the whipped cream until no white remains and scrape into pie shell and refrigerate at least 3 hours.



Before serving, garnish with a dollop of whipped cream. I used $\frac{1}{2}$ cup heavy cream and added 1 tablespoon of sugar, 1 tablespoon of rose water (add less if desired) and then whipped the mixture until firm. I then added $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of plain gelatin that had been added to $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon of water and heated until dissolved and then allowed to cool to room temperature before adding it to the whipped cream. The gelatin is not necessary if you plan to serve soon after whipping, but it is helpful if you have to make the whipped cream well in advance.

An edible flower such as a viola, violet, or Dianthus makes a beautiful finishing touch.

Henry Flowers



March 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	6	7 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	8	9
10	11	12 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	13	14 Pioneer Unit Meeting Workshop for Forum	15	16 SG Workday 8:00 to 10:00 (tentative)
17 	18	19 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	20	21 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	22 Herbal Forum	23 Herbal Forum
24	25	26 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	27	28 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	29	30
31 					BSG = Botany Study Group	FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden

April 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Board Meeting 9:00	3	4 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	5	6
7	8	9 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	10	11 Pioneer Unit Meeting	12	13
14	15	16 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	17	18 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	19	20 SG Workday 8:00 to 10:00 (tentative)
21	22	23 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	24	25 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	26	27 
28	29	30 FH Workday 8:30 to noon			BSG = Botany Study Group	FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden



PIONEER PATHS

Volume 20

Editor: Linda L. Rowlett, Ph.D.

Pioneer Paths is a publication of The Herb Society of America, Pioneer Unit. Nonmember subscriptions are available for \$10.00 per year.

The Mission Statement of The Herb Society of America: "To promote the knowledge, use, and delight of herbs through educational programs, research, and sharing the experience of its members with the community."

Chair—Linda L. Rowlett

Vice Chair Programs—Diana Reed

Vice Chair Membership—Georgia Sowers

Secretary—Karen Cornwell

Treasurer—Janie Plummer

Pioneer Unit
The Herb Society of America
Post Office Box 23
Round Top, Texas 78954